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**Knaak (nee McComber),  
Delores "Dee" J.**



Former Ramsey County Commissioner, State Senator and Minnesota Public Utilities Commissioner and long-time White Bear Lake resident,

died peacefully on February 9, 2020, in Maplewood, Minnesota at the age of 90.

Born July 13, 1929, in Hibbing, Minnesota, to Fred Jr. and Nellie McComber, she was a proud daughter of the Iron Range, graduating from Hibbing High School and Hibbing Jr. College. She obtained a teaching degree from St. Cloud State and was the holder of the very first Nursery School license issued in Minnesota. Her first passion was teaching young children and she taught in public and parochial schools (St. Pius) for nearly 20 years. Always an energetic community member she was involved in many community organizations and activities in the White Bear Area. From that, she became actively involved in Republican politics in the White Bear area.

At a time when women were still relatively rarely seen in elective politics, Dee became a pioneering woman politician in Minnesota, first by being appointed as a Ramsey County Commissioner, then when elected, in 1977, in a special election to the Minnesota State Senate, to become only the third woman elected to that body. In the Senate, she pioneered legislation for gifted and talented children, among other initiatives. Her public career culminated with the appointment by Governor Carlson to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, where she served one term until her retirement.

She is preceded in death by her father and mother, as well as her brother Alfred McComber. She is survived by her loving children, Marci (Carl Hornfeldt) and Fritz, as well as her grandchildren, Benjamin Knaak, Andrew Knaak, Joseph Knaak, Paul Knaak, Mary Knaak, Daniel Hornfeldt (Kyrsten) and Alina Hornfeldt (Felix Buckley-Jones).

A brief memorial service will be held at 4:30PM on March 12, at the Mueller Mortuary, 4738 Bald Eagle Ave., White Bear Lake. A celebration of life will follow until 8PM. A Mass and interment will occur at 10AM on Friday, March 13, at St. John's Abbey University in Collegeville.

In lieu of flowers, memorials are preferred to the Minnesota Humane Society.

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651-429-4944

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